

B. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1 (Currently Amended). A method for cross-trading commodities and the like among a plurality of exchanges comprising:

providing a computer;

establishing a communications link between the computer and the Internet;

providing a database, accessible by the computer, containing a plurality of user files wherein each of the plurality of user files corresponds to a specified user of the system and further containing levels of permission to access and/or trade corresponding to a plurality of exchanges to which the specified user may access;

providing a database, accessible by the computer, containing a plurality of open offers and bids wherein each of the plurality of open offers and bids contains information corresponding to open bids or offers for commodities and the open offers and bids are organized according to the commodities to which they correspond;

providing at least one computer site for transacting specified commodities executing on the computer accessible by selected users having proper levels of permission to access and/or trade for each exchange; and

presenting open offers and bids from more than one exchange transmitted from the computer to a user of the system over the communications link, querying the user database to retrieve levels of permission to access and/or trade from a user file corresponding to the user, retrieving open offers and bids from the indication database corresponding to the predetermined commodities within the exchanges to which the user has been determined to have access, generating a presentation of the retrieved open offers and bids having commodities from more than one exchange displayed thereon, and transmitting the presentation to the user over the communications link.

2 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 1 further comprising displaying said specified commodities associated with an exchange exclusively by users having levels of permission to access and/or trade corresponding to the exchange.

3 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 2 further comprising granting commodity-sharing privileges between at least two exchanges permitting at least one of the exchanges access to at least one commodity associated with the exchanges.

4 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 1 further comprising in each of said plurality of user files corresponding a plurality of transaction parameters to one or more open offers and bids associated with said user file, said transaction parameters governing the presentation and acceptance of open offers and bids associated therewith; and the method further comprising querying user files in said user database corresponding to each of said retrieved open offers and bids to determine transaction parameters associated with each of said retrieved open offers and bids, and generating said presentation of said retrieved open offers and bids in accordance with said determined transaction parameters.

5 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 4 further comprising said transaction parameters enabling a submitter of an open offer or bid to remain anonymous to specific users of the system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

6 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 4 further comprising said transaction parameters enabling a submitter of an open offer or bid to reveal contact information to specific users of the system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

7 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 4 further comprising said transaction parameters permitting a submitter of an open offer or bid to grant specific users preferred status over other users of the system with respect to actions concerning open offers and bids submitted by the submitter.

8 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 1 further comprising: requesting to register submitted by the user to said computer over said communications link; transmitting a registration form to the user over said communications link in response to said request, submitting a completed registration form by the user to said computer over said communications link; and receiving said completed registration form, creating a user file based on said completed registration form, and storing said user file in said user database.

9 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 8 further comprising the user determining said transaction parameters and submitting to the computer within said completed registration form and further comprising retrieving transaction parameters submitted within said completed registration form and storing said transaction parameters in said user file corresponding to the user.

10 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 1 further comprising; the user submitting a completed open offer or bid submission form to said computer over said communications link; and transmitting an open offer or bid submission form to the user over said communications link, receiving said completed open offer or bid submission form submitted by the user, creating a new open offer or bid based on said completed open offer or bid submission form, associating said new open offer or bid with a user file corresponding to said user, and storing said new open offer or bid in said indication database.

11 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 10 further comprising the user determining said transaction parameters and submitted to the computer by the user within said completed indication submission form; and further comprising retrieving transaction parameters submitted within said completed indication submission form and storing said transaction parameters in a user file corresponding to the user.

12 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 1 further comprising operating and maintaining an interactive website to facilitate interaction between the user and said computer.

13 (Withdrawn). A system for trading commodities and the like comprising:

a computer;

a communications link between said computer and the Internet;

a database, accessible by said computer, containing a plurality of user files wherein each of said plurality of user files contains a plurality of transaction parameters corresponding to one or more indications associated with said user file, said transaction parameters governing the presentation and acceptance of indications associated therewith;

a database, accessible by said computer, containing a plurality of indications wherein each of said plurality of indications contains information corresponding to open bids or offers for commodities;

an indication selection submitted by a user over said communications link; and,

software executing on said computer for receiving said indication selection, retrieving an indication corresponding to said indication selection from said indication database, querying a user file in said user database corresponding to said indication to determine transaction parameters associated with said indication, and presenting said indication to the user in accordance with said determined transaction parameters over said communications link.

14 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 13 wherein said transaction parameters enable a submitter of an indication to remain anonymous to specific users of the system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

15 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 13 wherein said transaction parameters enable a submitter of an indication to reveal contact information to specific users of the system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

16 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 13 wherein said transaction parameters permit a submitter of an indication to grant specific users preferred status over other users of the system with respect to actions concerning indications submitted by the submitter.

17 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 13 wherein said transaction parameters enable a submitter of an indication to submit an indication on behalf of and under the name of another user of the system when the other user has previously designated the submitter as having permission to perform such action.

18 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 13 further comprising; completed indication submission form submitted by the user to said computer over said communications link; and, software executing on said computer for transmitting an indication submission form to the user over said communications link, receiving said completed indication submission form submitted by the user, creating a new indication based on said completed indication submission form, associating said new indication with a user file corresponding to said user, and storing said new indication in said indication database.

19 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 18 wherein said transaction parameters are determined by the user and submitted to the computer by the user within said completed indication submission form and further comprising software executing on said computer for retrieving transaction parameters submitted within said completed indication submission form and storing said transaction parameters in a user file corresponding to the user.

20 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 13 further comprising: a request to register submitted by the user to said computer over said communications link; software executing on said computer for transmitting a registration form to the user over said communications link in response to said request, a completed registration form submitted by the user to said computer over said communications link; and, software executing on said computer for receiving said completed registration form, creating a user file based on said completed registration form, and storing said user file in said user database.

21 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 20 wherein said transaction parameters are determined by the user and submitted to the computer by the user within said completed registration form and further comprising software executing on said computer for retrieving transaction parameters submitted within said completed registration form and storing said transaction parameters in said user file corresponding to the user.

22 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 13 wherein said indication selection constitutes an acceptance of the selected indication by the user and further comprising software executing on said computer for automatically consummating a transaction between the user and a submitter of said indication upon submission of said indication selection to the computer.

23 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 22 further comprising software executing on said computer for retrieving information from said indication database corresponding to said selection necessary to consummate said acceptance of said transaction.

24 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 13 wherein said indication selection constitutes an acceptance of a non-firm indication chosen by the user from said plurality of bids and offers.

25 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 24 wherein said transaction parameters include contact information and further comprising software executing on said computer for retrieving said contact information corresponding to said indication selection from said user database and transmitting said retrieved contact information to the user over said communications link, wherein said contact information provides the user with the ability to communicate with the submitter of the selected indication.

26 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 25 further comprising a communication between the user and the original submitter to finalize said acceptance.

27 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 26 wherein said communication involves a negotiation between the user and the original submitter regarding the selected indication.

28 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 27 further comprising software executing on said computer for providing an interactive communication environment simultaneously accessible by both the user and the submitter over said communication link wherein said communication occurs in said environment.

29 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 13 further comprising software executing on said computer for operating and maintaining an interactive website to facilitate interaction between the user and said computer.

30 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 13 further comprising software executing on said computer for tracking actions performed by the user on said system and storing said tracked actions in a user file corresponding to the user in said user database.

31 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 30 further comprising: a trading history request submitted by the user to said computer over said communications link software executing on said computer querying said user database to retrieve said tracked action from a user file corresponding to said user, compiling a trading history based on said tracked actions, and transmitting said trading history to said user over said communications link.

32 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 13 wherein each of said plurality of user files in said user database contain authentication data unique to a user associated therewith and further comprising: authentication data submitted by the user to said

computer over said communications link; and, software executing on said computer for querying said user database to verify said submitted authentication data.

33 (Withdrawn). A system for trading commodities and the like comprising:

a computer;

a communications link between said computer and the Internet;

a database, accessible by said computer, containing a plurality of user files wherein each of said plurality of user files contains transaction parameters corresponding to one or more indications associated with said user file, said transaction parameters governing the presentation and acceptance of indications associated therewith;

a database, accessible by said computer, containing a plurality of indications wherein each of said plurality of indications contains information corresponding to open bids or offers for commodities;

a presentation of said plurality of indications transmitted from said computer to the user over said communications link, software executing on said computer for retrieving said plurality of indications from said indication database, querying user files in said user database corresponding to each of said plurality of indications to determine transaction parameters associated with each of said plurality of indications, generating a presentation of said plurality of indications in accordance with said determined transaction parameters, and transmitting said presentation to the user over said communications link.

34 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 33 wherein said transaction parameters enable a submitter of an indication to remain anonymous to specific users of the system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

35 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 33 wherein said transaction parameters permit a submitter of an indication to grant specific users preferred status over other users of the system with respect to actions concerning indications submitted by the submitter.

36 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 33 further comprising: a formatting selection submitted to said computer by the user over said communications link; and, software executing on said computer for transmitting a plurality of formatting options to the user over said communications link, receiving said formatting selection submitted by

the user, and formatting said presentation according to said formatting selection prior to transmitting said presentation to the user.

37 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 34 further comprising: a sorting selection submitted to said computer by the user over said communications link; and, software executing on said computer for transmitting a plurality of sorting options to the user over said communications link, receiving said sorting selection submitted by the user, and sorting said presentation according to said submitted sorting selection prior to transmitting said presentation to the user.

38 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 33 further comprising: a content selection submitted to said computer by the user over said communications link; and, software executing on said computer for transmitting a plurality of content options to the user over said communications link, receiving said content selection submitted by the user, retrieving indications from said indications database corresponding to said submitted content selection, and transmitting said retrieved indications to the user over said communications link.

39 (Withdrawn). A method for trading commodities and the like comprising:
receiving an indication selection chosen by a user from a selectable presentation of indications over said communications link;
retrieving an indication corresponding to said indication selection from a database containing a plurality of indications wherein each of said plurality of indications contains information corresponding to open bids or offers for commodities;
retrieving transaction parameters corresponding to said indication selection from a database containing a plurality of user files wherein each of said plurality of user files contains a plurality of transaction parameters corresponding to one or more indications associated with said user file; and,
completing a transaction between the user and a submitter of said indication in accordance with said determined transaction parameters over said communications link.

40 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 39 wherein said step of completing a transaction further comprises the steps of: retrieving contact information corresponding to said indication selection from said user database wherein said transaction parameters

include contact information provided by the submitter; and transmitting said retrieved contact information to the user over said communications link, wherein said contact information provides the user with the ability to communicate with the submitter of the selected indication.

41 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 39 wherein said transaction parameters enable a submitter of an indication to remain anonymous to specific users of the system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

42 (Withdrawn). The method of claim 39 wherein said transaction parameters enable a submitter of an indication to reveal contact information to specific users of the system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

43 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 39 wherein said transaction parameters permit a submitter of an indication to grant specific users preferred status over other users of the system with respect to actions concerning indications submitted by the submitter.

44 (Currently Amended). A system for cross-trading commodities and the like among a plurality of exchanges comprising:

- a computer;

- a communications link between the computer and the Internet;

- a database, accessible by the computer, containing a plurality of user files wherein each of the plurality of user files corresponds to a specified user of the system and further containing levels of permission to access and/or trade corresponding to a plurality of exchanges to which the specified user may access;

- at least one computer site for transacting specified commodities executing on the computer accessible by selected users having proper levels of permission to access and/or trade for each exchange;

- a database, accessible by the computer, containing a plurality of open offers and bids wherein each of the plurality of open offers and bids contains information corresponding to open bids or offers for commodities and the open offers and bids are organized according to the commodities to which they correspond; and

- means executing on the computer for querying the user database to retrieve levels of permission to access and/or trade from a user file corresponding to the user; retrieving

open offers and bids from more than one exchange from the indication database corresponding to predetermined commodities within the exchanges to which the user has been determined to have access, generating a presentation of the retrieved open offers and bids having commodities from more than one exchange displayed thereon, transmitting the presentation to the user over the communications link, and displaying the presentation of the retrieved open offers and bids corresponding to the commodities within the exchanges to which the user has been determined to have access.

45 (Previously Presented). The system of claim 44 wherein the specified commodities associated with an exchange are viewed exclusively by users having levels of permission to access and/or trade corresponding to the exchange.

46 (Previously Presented). The system of claim 45 further comprising commodity-sharing privileges granted between at least two exchanges permitting at least one of the exchanges access to at least one commodity associated with the exchanges.

47 (Previously Presented). The system of claim 44 wherein each of the plurality of user files further contains a plurality of transaction parameters corresponding to one or more open offers and bids associated with the user file, the transaction parameters governing the presentation and acceptance of open offers and bids associated therewith and the system further comprising means executing on the computer for querying user files in the user database corresponding to each of the retrieved open offers and bids to determine transaction parameters associated with each of the retrieved open offers and bids, and generating the presentation of the retrieved open offers and bids in accordance with the determined transaction parameters.

48 (Previously Presented). The system of claim 47 wherein the transaction parameters enable a submitter of an open offer or bid to remain anonymous to specific users of the system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

49 (Previously Presented). The system of claim 44 wherein the transaction parameters enable a submitter of an open offer or bid to reveal contact information to specific users of the system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

50 (Withdrawn). A system for trading commodities and the like comprising:

a computer;

a communications link between the computer and the Internet;

a database, accessible by the computer, containing a plurality of user files wherein each of the plurality of user files corresponds to a specified user of the system and further containing exchange permissions corresponding to exchanges to which the specified user may access;

at least one computerized exchange for transacting specified commodities accessible by selected users having proper exchange permissions for each exchange; and

a display that permits users to post and view bids and offers and negotiate and consummate transactions on common commodities from such exchanges;

whereby sharing of common commodities from such exchanges pools and thereby improves liquidity.

51 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 50 wherein the display comprises designated web sites for each exchange.

52 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 50 further including a database, accessible by the computer, containing a plurality of indications wherein each of the plurality of indications contains information corresponding to open bids or offers for commodities and the indications are organized according to the commodities to which they correspond.

53 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 52 further including software executing on the computer for querying the user database to retrieve exchange permissions from a user file corresponding to the user; retrieving indications from the indication database corresponding to predetermined commodities within the exchanges to which the user has been determined to have access, generating a presentation of the retrieved indications, transmitting the presentation to the user over the communications link, and displaying the presentation of the retrieved indications corresponding to the commodities within the exchanges to which the user has been determined to have access.

54 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 50 wherein the specified commodities associated with an exchange are viewed exclusively by users having exchange permissions corresponding to the exchange.

55 (Withdrawn). The system of claim 50 wherein the transaction parameters enable a submitter of an indication to reveal contact information to specific users of the system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

56 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 1 further permitting users to post and view bids and offers and negotiate and consummate transactions on commodities form one of more exchanges on a display.

57 (Previously Presented). The system of claim 44 further comprising a display for users that permits users to post and view bids and offers and negotiate and consummate transactions on commodities form one of more exchanges.

58 (Currently Amended). A method for cross-trading commodities and the like among a plurality of exchanges comprising:

- providing a computer;

- establishing a communications link between the computer and the Internet;

- providing a database, accessible by the computer, containing a plurality of user files wherein each of the plurality of user files corresponds to a specified user of the system and further containing levels of permission to access and/or trade corresponding to a plurality of exchanges to which the specified user may access;

- providing a database, accessible by the computer, containing a plurality of open offers and bids wherein each of the plurality of open offers and bids contains information corresponding to open bids or offers for commodities and the open offers and bids are organized according to the commodities to which they correspond;

- providing at least one computer site for transacting specified commodities executing on the computer accessible by selected users having proper levels of permission to access and/or trade for each exchange; and

- presenting open offers and bids from more than one exchange transmitted from the computer to a user of the system over the communications link, querying the user database to retrieve levels of permission to access and/or trade from a user file corresponding to the user, retrieving open offers and bids from the indication database corresponding to the predetermined commodities within the exchanges to which the user has been determined to have access, generating a presentation of the retrieved open offers

and bids having commodities from more than one exchange displayed thereon, and transmitting the presentation to the user over the communications link.